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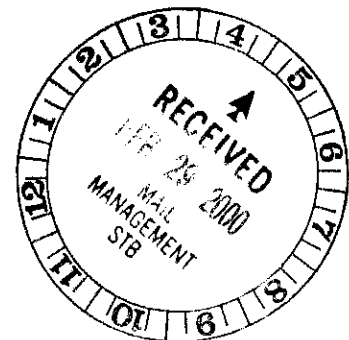
# Network Forest Products Limited

65 Passmore Avenue, P.O. Box 6000 Agincourt, ON M1S 3C6  
Tel: (416) 291-9811 Toll Free: 1-877-4 NET-WOOD Fax: (416) 297-0598  
www.4netwood.com

February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2000

Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
Office of the Secretary  
Case Control Unit  
1925 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
20423-0001

ENTERED  
Office of the Secretary  
FEB 29 2000  
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Public Record



**Attention: STB Ex Parte No. 582**

Dear Sir:

Network Forest Products Limited is a major Lumber Distribution and Manufacturing company headquartered in Toronto, Canada. Our annual sales for the year 2000 are expected to be approximately 180 million dollars. Our operations require us to be a major user of rail service in the U.S. and Canada. The purpose of this letter is to comment on the issues to be discussed on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2000 in Ex Parte 582.

We encourage the Surface Transportation Board to focus on whether the proposed CN-BNSF combination is good for shippers, not on potential downstream effects. The CN-BNSF combination should be judged on its merits and if other carriers propose mergers, then these cases ought to be evaluated on their merits.

The timing of the proposed CN-BNSF combination is not the central issue for our company. Our concern is service. Recent mergers have failed on service, not because of timing. Accordingly, the Surface Transportation Board should focus on ensuring that CN-BNSF combination, and any other future mergers, will deliver service.

The Surface Transportation Board has a comprehensive process to evaluate railroad transactions and protect the public interest. It should fairly evaluate the CN-BNSF combination according to that process. Do not let other railroads use the Surface Transportation Board process to protect themselves and not shippers.

Sincerely,

**NETWORK FOREST PRODUCTS LIMITED**

Robert Ziner  
President

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MEMBERS: Gateway Lumber Inspection Bureau, Ontario Timber (Fibre) Industry Association, The Lumber and Milling Materials Association of Ontario

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